
New Jersey Highlights of the 2008 American Community Survey

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The American Community Survey (ACS) is the US Census Bureau's answer to data user's ever-increasing need for more timely data. It is also a critical component of the bureau's re-engineered decennial census for 2010. The Census Bureau has defined the goals of the ACS as follows:

- Provide federal, state, local, and tribal governments an information base for the administration and evaluation of their programs.*
- Improve the 2010 Census.*
- Provide data users with timely demographic, housing, social, and economic data updated every year that can be compared across states, communities, and population groups.¹*

In the past, the decennial census has been the source of data needed by federal, state, and local governments to distribute funding among jurisdictions and population groups. The problem with the decennial census is that the data became out-of-date quickly as the decade progressed. However, with the ACS, more timely annual data will be available to identify changes in population, housing and their related characteristics.

Throughout the decade, the ACS will annually collect data typically found on the decennial census' "long form" questionnaire. The "long form" is a sample based survey used to collect and estimate demographic, social, economic, and housing characteristics of the population and housing stock. The ACS will replace the need for a "long form" questionnaire in 2010 and allow resources to focus on a "short form" census every 10 years. The "short form" will be used to provide counts of people and housing units only.

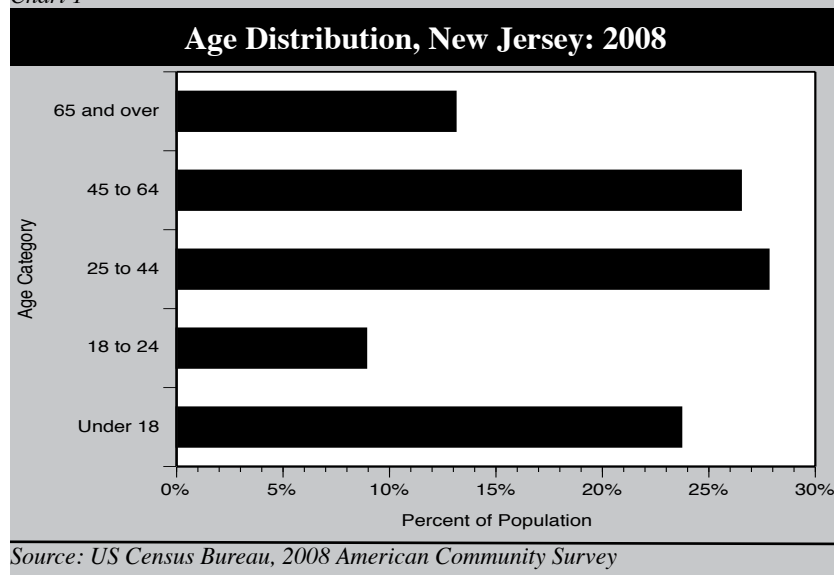
Population

According to the 2008 ACS, New Jersey's estimated total population was 8,682,661. The Garden State was the 11th most populated state in the U.S. in 2008. With 36.8 million residents, California was the most populated state, and Wyoming was the least populated state with 500,000 residents.

Among New Jersey counties, approximately 10.3 percent of the state's total population resided in Bergen County making it the highest populated county in the state with 894,840 residents. Salem County was the least populated county with 66,141 people. Based on the estimates released from the US Census Bureau's population estimates program, in December of 2006, New Jersey was no longer the tenth most populated state in the nation. In 2006, North Carolina replaced New Jersey as the tenth most populated state. In 2000, the state's population was ranked ninth and dropped in rankings to tenth in 2003.

Age, Race and Sex

Chart 1



The median age in New Jersey was 38.7 years old, which ranked 10th oldest among all states. Maine had the oldest median age at 41.9 years while Utah was the youngest state at 28.7 years. The median age nationally, in 2008, was 36.9 years of age. A look at New Jersey's counties reveals that the median age ranged from a slightly younger 36.2 years in Hudson and Cumberland Counties to a more distinguished 43.6 years in Cape May County. More than twenty-three percent or 2 million of New Jersey's total popula-

tion were under 18 years of age while 1.1 million or 13.2 percent were 65 years old and over. Approximately 5.5 million or 63.2 percent of total population were between 18 and 64 years of age.

Nearly 8.5 million (98.1%) New Jersey residents report themselves as one race. Just under 71.0 percent (6.1 million or 70.8%) were white; 13.6 percent (1.2 million) were black or African American; and 7.6 percent (0.7 million) were Asian. New Jersey ranks third behind Hawaii and California in the percentage of the population who report themselves as Asian alone. Among any of the race categories, 1.4 million (16.3%) report themselves as being Hispanic or of Latino origin.

As a state, New Jersey was 51.0 percent (4.4 million) female and 49.0 percent (4.3 million) male according to the 2008 ACS. This closely mirrors the national gender distribution of 50.7 percent female and 49.3 percent male.

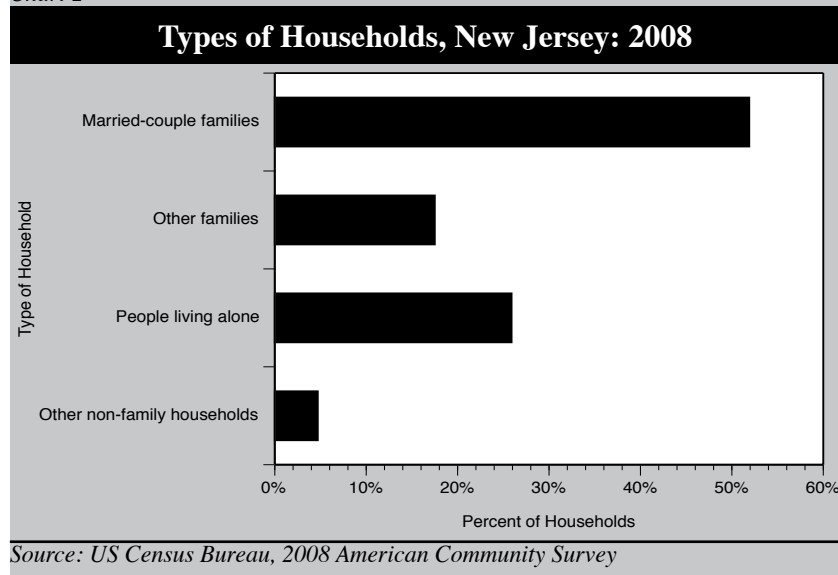
Households and Families

In 2008, the Garden State was home to some 3.2 million households. The size of an average household in New Jersey was 2.7 people which ranked 8th largest nationally. The national average household size in 2008 was 2.6 people. Utah was the state with the largest household size (3.2 people) and North Dakota had the smallest household size (2.2 people).

ACS data on household type in New Jersey, in 2008, reveals that approximately 2.2 million households (68.7%) were family households. The average family size was 3.3 people. Married-couple family households accounted for 1.6 million (51.5%) households in the state while other families totaled just over half a million people (543,542 or 17.2%).

Statewide, non-family households made up nearly 1 million (31.3%) of all households in 2008. People living alone accounted for 26.5 percent of households and those households with one or more people aged 65 years and over accounted for 25.5 percent of total households in the state. A closer look at both of these groups reveals that nearly 10 percent of New Jersey households are made up of householders aged 65 years and over and living alone.

Chart 2



Place of Birth and Language Spoken

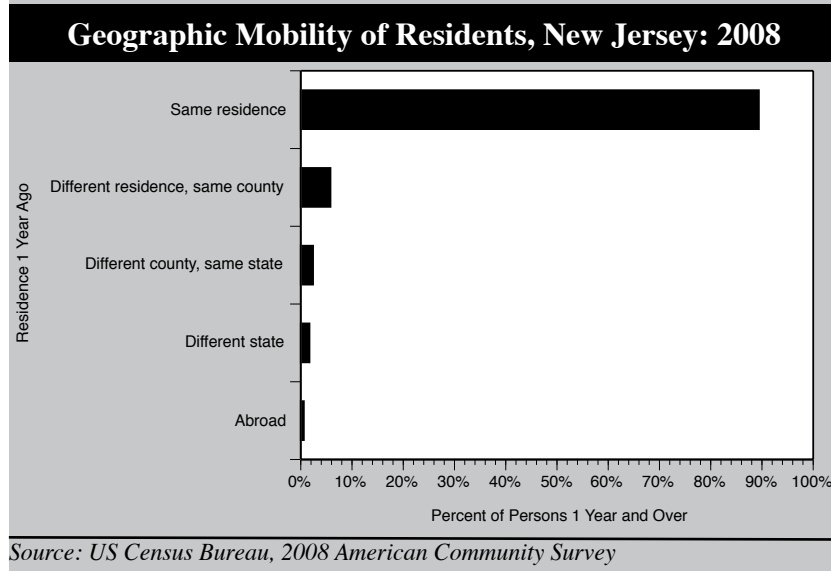
Results from the 2008 ACS show that, in the United States, 12.5 percent of the total population was foreign born. The results also show that approximately one out of every five people (1.7 million or 19.8%) living in New Jersey was foreign born. California (26.8%) and New York (21.7%) were the only states that had a higher percentage of total population in this category. Among New Jersey counties, Hudson County had the highest percentage of foreign born (40.2%) while Cape May County had the lowest percentage (1.4%). Nearly 4.6 million (52.6%) of the total population were born in New Jersey with another 2.2 million people (25.1%) born in a different state.

Among the population five years and over in New Jersey (8.1 million), 72.1 percent speak English while the remaining 27.9 percent speak a language other than English at home. This percentage tied for 5th nationally with Nevada behind the states of California (42.3%), New Mexico (35.4%), Texas (33.8%) and New York (29.0%). Out of residents who speak a language other than English, in New Jersey, 1.1 million (50.3%) speak Spanish and 42.4 percent reported that they did not speak English “very well”.

Place of Residence

The 2008 ACS also reports estimates of geographic mobility for the population aged one year and over. Of the 8.6 million people in this age range, 89.4 percent (7.7 million) were living in the same residence as in the previous year. Another 6.0 percent moved within the past year from another residence in the same county; 2.4 percent moved from a different county within New Jersey; 1.7 percent moved here from out of state, and 0.7 percent moved to the Garden State from abroad.

Chart 3

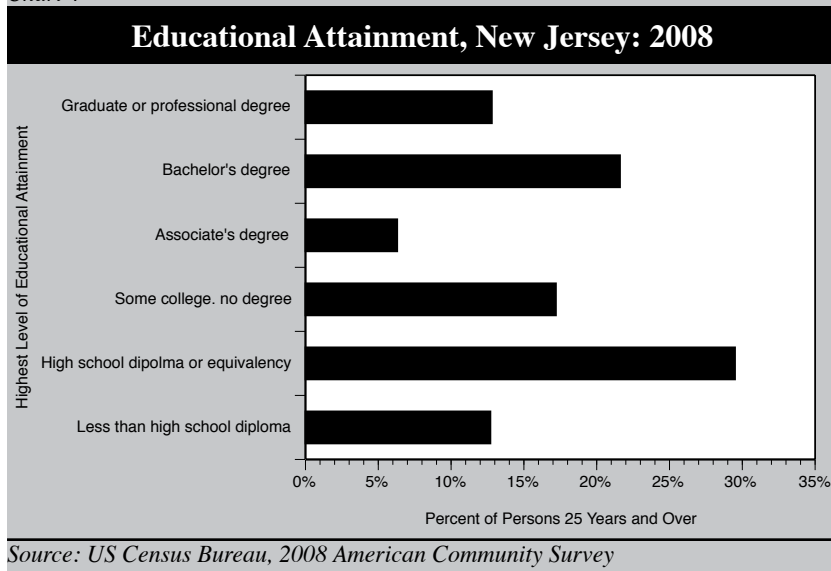


Educational Attainment

In 2008, the educational attainment level of New Jersey's total population 25 years and older was above the national average. The ACS reported that 87.4 percent had a high school education or higher and 34.4 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher. This surpasses the national average of 85 percent with a high school education or higher and 27.7 percent with a bachelor's degree or higher.

The ACS also reported that total school enrollment for 2008 was nearly 2.3 million. Enrollment in nursery school and kindergarten was approximately 296,466. Just under 1.4 million combined were enrolled in elementary (grades 1-8) and high (grades 9-12) school. Those pursuing higher-level education in college and graduate school accounted for more than 572,800 people.

Chart 4



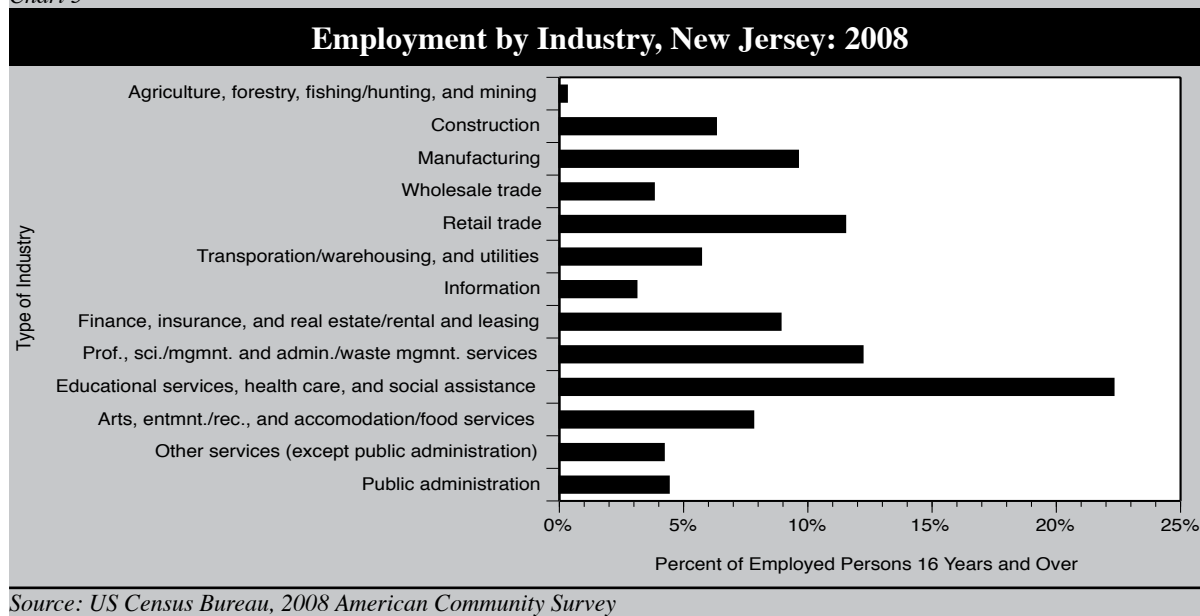
Disability

Among New Jersey's 8.6 million civilian non-institutionalized population in 2008, 9.8 percent reported a disability. This is below the US average of 12.1 percent. Across age groups, as one would expect, this percentage increased as age groups progress. In New Jersey, those under age 18, were reported to have a 3.3 percent (67,384) disability rate. The 18 to 64 year old category had 7.5 percent (404,933) reporting a disability. The 65-year and over age group had the largest rate of disabilities reported at 33.6 percent (370,468).

Employment Status and Industry Employment

The employment status data reported in the 2008 ACS relate to the population 16 years and over. Approximately 6.9 million people in New Jersey were part of this age group in 2008. Those considered in the labor force from this group accounted for 4.7 million or 68 percent of the population 16 years and over. Nationally, the rate of those considered in the labor force from this age group was 65.9 percent. In 2008, 47 percent of those people in the labor force aged 16 years and over were female, 53 percent were male.

Chart 5



The 2008 ACS results for New Jersey indicated, for the employed population 16 years and over, that the industries employing the greatest number of people were educational services, health care and social assistance (978,769 or 22.3%); professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services (534,042 or 12.2%); and retail trade (503,982 or 11.5%).

Occupations and Class of Worker

The 2008 ACS results also indicated that the most common occupations among New Jersey's employed population aged 16 years or older were management, professional, and related occupations (1,721,971 or 39.3%); sales and office occupations (1,164,565 or 26.6%); service occupations (691,479 or 15.8%); production, transportation, and material moving occupations (454,944 or 10.4%); and construction, extraction, maintenance and repair occupations (345,531 or 7.9%). The vast majority of people employed in New Jersey are private sector wage and salary workers (3,555,610 or 81.1%). Another 14.1 percent (616,854) worked for federal, state, or local government. Slightly more than five percent were self-employed in their own non-incorporated business (206,686 or 4.7%).

Commuting to Work

The preferred means of commuting to work in New Jersey, according to the 2008 ACS, is driving to work alone. More than 71.7 percent of workers traveled to work this way while an additional 9.1 percent carpooled to work. Those who reported using public transportation to commute to work accounted for 10.3 percent of workers; 3.3 percent walked to work; and another 3.3 percent work at home. According to the ACS, the average commute time in New Jersey was 30.1 minutes. This ranked as the third longest commute time behind New York (31.6 minutes) and Maryland (31.5 minutes). North Dakota had the shortest commute time (16.0 minutes). Nationally, the average travel time to work was 25.5 minutes.

Income

Results from the 2008 ACS reveal that the median household income in New Jersey was second among all the states at \$70,378 behind only Maryland at \$70,545. Rounding out the top five were Connecticut (\$68,595), Alaska (\$68,460) and Hawaii (\$67,214). Nationally, the median household income was \$52,029. Mississippi was the state with the lowest median household income at \$37,790. Among New Jersey counties, the three counties with the highest median household income were Hunterdon County (\$102,683), Somerset County (\$100,608), and Morris County (\$99,706). The county with the lowest median household income was Cumberland County (\$50,833).

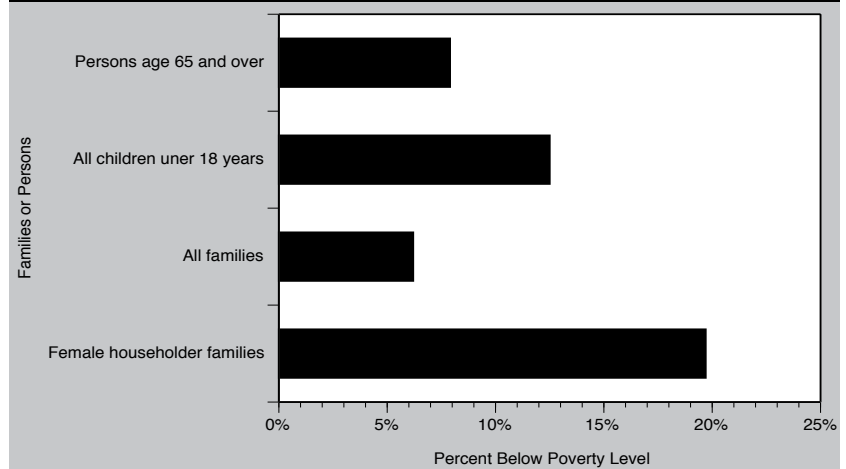
The median family income for the State in 2008 was \$85,761, ranking first among all states ahead of Connecticut (\$85,344) and Maryland (\$84,415). At \$46,668, Mississippi had the lowest median family income. The median family income for the US in 2008 was \$63,366. Not surprising, the three New Jersey counties with the highest median family income were the same as those with the highest median household income: Hunterdon County (\$125,551), Somerset County (\$117,972), and Morris County (\$115,413). Cumberland County had the lowest median household income (\$58,122).

Poverty

The 2008 ACS reports that 8.7 percent of people in New Jersey were living below the poverty level. Only Alaska (8.4%), Maryland (8.1%) and New Hampshire (7.6%) had lower percentages of people in poverty status. Mississippi (21.2%), Arkansas (17.3%), Kentucky (17.3%), and Louisiana (17.3%) had the highest percentage of people below poverty level. The percentage of people in poverty nationally, in 2008, was 13.2 percent. At the county geography level, Hudson County (15.2%), Essex County (14.8%), and Passaic County (14.4%) had the greatest percentage of people below poverty level while Somerset County (2.3%) had the lowest percentage.

Chart 6

Poverty Rates, New Jersey: 2008



Source: US Census Bureau, 2008 American Community Survey

The percentage of people under 18 years of age that were below the poverty level was 12.5 percent while the percentage of people 65 years and over that were living in poverty was 7.9 percent. The percentage of all New Jersey families living below the poverty level was 6.2 percent in 2008. This percentage tripled for those families with a female householder but no husband present (19.7%).

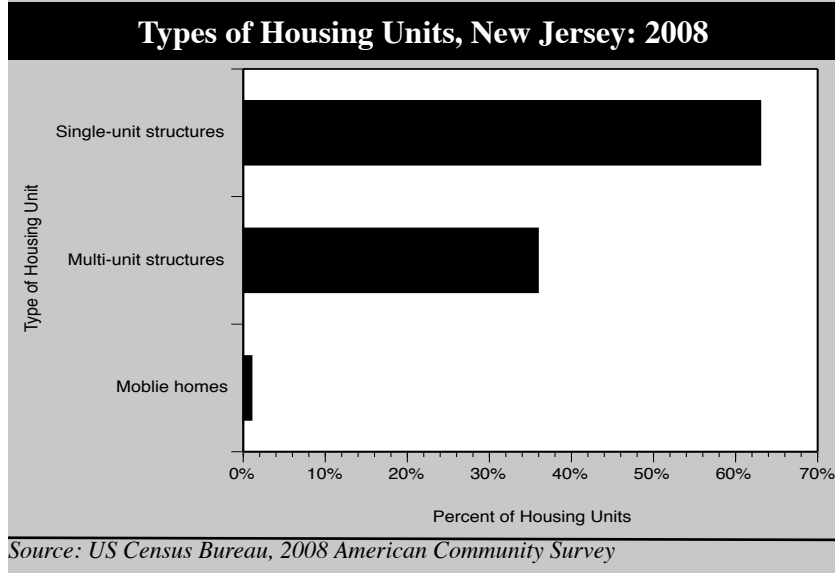
Housing Characteristics

New Jersey had approximately 3.5 million housing units in 2008. Just over 2.2 million (2,217,349 or 63.0%) were single unit structures. Another 35.9 percent (1,262,313) were multi-unit structures and the remaining one percent were mobile homes. Approximately 10.3 percent (361,911) of total housing units in the Garden State were vacant in 2008. Over half a million (586,766 or 16.7%) of the housing units in New Jersey were built in 1990 or later.

Among the 3.2 million occupied housing units in New Jersey, just over 2.1 million (2,113,974 or 67%) are owner occupied housing units. The remaining 33 percent (1,040,038) were renter occupied housing units. Some of the more interesting characteristics of occupied housing units in New Jersey include 2.1 percent (66,993) having no telephone service available; 11.5 percent (362,145) of housing units have no vehicles available while 54.0 percent (1,702,865) had two or more vehicles available; and 72.7 percent (2,293,931) of housing units heat their homes with natural gas from the utility company.

The median housing value of owner-occupied housing in New Jersey for 2008 was \$364,100. This value ranked fourth nationally behind Hawaii (\$560,200), the District of Colum-

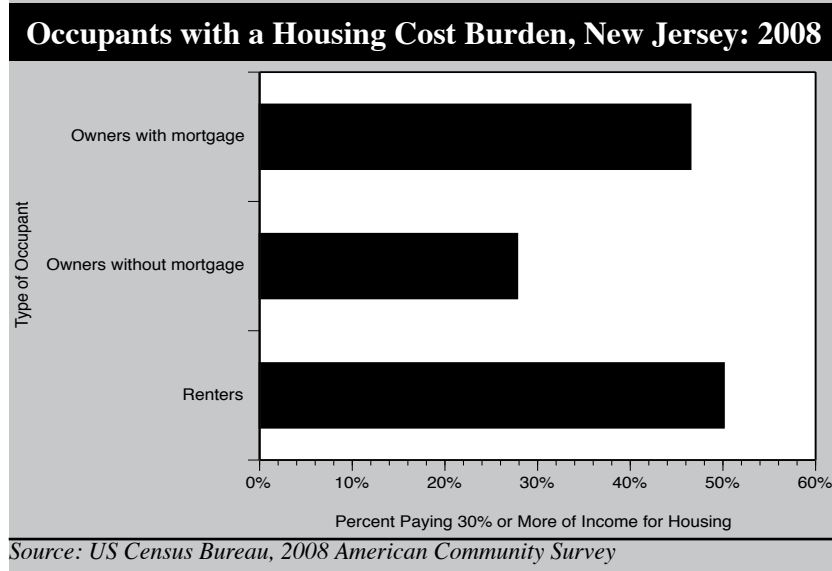
Chart 7



bia (\$474,100), and California (\$467,000). In the United States, the median housing value was \$197,600. The state with the lowest median housing value among owner-occupied housing units, in 2008, was West Virginia (\$95,900). Among counties in the Garden State, the three with the highest median value were Bergen County (\$486,300), Morris County (\$482,700), and Somerset County (\$452,500), while the three lowest were Cumberland County (\$184,500), Salem County (\$215,800) and Camden County (\$229,000).

According to the 2008 ACS, median monthly housing costs for owners with a mortgage was \$2,360 while owners without a mortgage paid \$874 monthly and renters paid \$1068 in housing costs. The number of housing units where 30.0 percent or more of income was spent on housing in 2008 among housing units with a mortgage was 703,776 (46.5%); housing units without a mortgage was 163,902 (27.8%) and renters was 494,026 (50.1%).

Chart 8



Sample Size and Data Availability

In 2005, the ACS began full implementation using a rolling, random sample of housing addresses throughout the US every month. The annual sample size of the ACS is about 3 million housing unit addresses nationally. Prior to 2005 (2000-2004), as part of its testing phase, the ACS had a sample size of about 800,000 addresses per year and produced estimates for all geographies with at least 250,000 people. These geographies included the US, states, places, counties and metropolitan areas. The release of annual estimates from the ACS for geographic areas with a population of 65,000 or more began in 2006. For New Jersey, single year estimates are now available each year for the State and all 21 counties, all 13 Congressional Districts, all 7 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA), and the 19 largest county subdivisions (municipalities) with population greater than 65,000. Three year average estimates are also available for geographic areas with population of 20,000 or more. In 2010, 5-year average estimates will be available for geographies smaller than 20,000 people including census tracts and block groups. From 2010 on, all estimates will be updated annually.

Table 1

American Community Survey Release Dates									
Type of Data	Population Size of Area	Data for the previous year released in the summer of:							
		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010+
Annual Estimates	250,000+								→
Annual Estimates	65,000+								→
3-Year Averages	20,000+								→
5-Year Averages	Census Tract and Block Group								→

☐ Data reflect American Community Survey testing through 2004.
Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey Office

More information, data, and other ACS topics are available online at the Office of Labor Planning and Analysis' Web site (www.nj.gov/labor/lra) and the US Census Bureau's Web site (www.census.gov/acs/www/index.html). For more information about ACS data for New Jersey, contact the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Labor Market and Demographic Research, PO Box 388, Trenton, NJ 08625-0388. Telephone: (609) 984-2595 or e-mail Leonard.Preston@dol.state.nj.us.

Footnote: ¹US Census Bureau, American Community Survey Office.

Notes: Detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

Percentages are based on unrounded numbers.